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The Noble Life of The Prophet

(Peace be upon him)

Volume

①

By:

Dr. 'Ali Muhammad As-Sallaabee



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INTRODUCTION

Indeed, all praise is for Allah; we praise Him, repent to Him, and seek His forgiveness and help. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own selves and of our wicked deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can lead astray; and whomsoever Allah leads astray, none can guide. And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, and He has no partner; and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾﴾

"O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), and die not except in the state of Islam (as Muslims) (with complete submission to Allah)." (Qur'an 3: 102)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾﴾

"O mankind be dutiful to your Lord, who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever and All-Watcher over you." (Qur'an 4:1)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾﴾

"O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good

deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hellfire and made to enter Paradise)." (Qur'an 33: 70, 71)

Male or female, adult or child, scholar or commoner, businessman or laborer – all Muslims need to study the biography of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In fact, the fulfillment of many of our Islamic duties hinges upon our knowledge of the Prophet's life. For example, every Muslim should love the Prophet ﷺ; yet how can one love him without knowing him. We were not alive when the Prophet ﷺ was preaching the message of Islam to the Quraish, so the only way we have left to become intimately acquainted with the Prophet ﷺ, and consequently to love him, is to study his sayings and deeds, which give us partial glimpses of his life, or to study his biography, which fits the pieces of his life together, so that we can have an overall view of his ideal character. And how are we to follow the Prophet ﷺ if we do not know his sayings and deeds, or – which is more relevant to his biography – the context in which his sayings and deeds occurred. Thus we are all in dire need of acquainting ourselves with the life of the Prophet ﷺ.

Through the study of the *Seerah* (the Prophet's biography), we are able to appreciate how the Prophet ﷺ was an ideal husband, ideal father, ideal leader, ideal ruler, ideal educator, ideal judge, and so on. So regardless of our situation and who we are, we benefit from studying the Prophet's life. If one has dedicated at least some part of his life to inviting others to Islam (which makes him a *Daa'ee* – a word I will henceforward use – one who invites others to the teachings of Islam), then the Prophet's biography is for him an indispensable guidebook. Through studying the Prophet's *Seerah*, the *Daa'ee* learns about the Prophet's methodology for inviting others to Islam; furthermore, he learns about how the Prophet ﷺ dealt with those who refused to embrace Islam and how he ﷺ was patient when he was made to suffer at their hands, not to mention the countless other lessons and morals he learns from the *Seerah*.

If one is an educator – of children at home or school, or of adults at a community level – one learns how the best educator mankind has ever known raised a generation of true Muslims, who went on to develop the most wonderful civilization that mankind has ever known. The early converts to Islam were educated in the world's finest institution of higher learning – the House of Al-Arqam (the house wherein Muslims secretly met in the early days of Islam) – where the Prophet ﷺ taught them the Qur'an, Islamic beliefs, the manners of Islam, and so on. His students graduated with flying colours, becoming leaders and educators of the following generation of Muslims.

If one is a leader, one learns true qualities of leadership from the Prophet's *Seerah*, in terms of how the Prophet ﷺ was just; how he united the Muslims; how he ﷺ dealt with subversive elements of society, namely the hypocrites, who were headed by 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool; and how he ﷺ constantly strove for the betterment of the Muslim nation.

If one is a scholar, one relies on the *Seerah* to understand the Qur'an, for the Prophet's actions represent a practical application of the teachings of the Qur'an. Furthermore, the revelation of many Verses was prompted by actual events that took place during the Prophet's lifetime; a scholar can only understand such Verses if he understands the events for which they were revealed. And in fact (as we will *In Sha Allah* see throughout this book) knowledge of all Islamic sciences – such as '*Aqeedah* (beliefs), jurisprudence, and *Tafseer* – hinges frequently upon knowledge of some aspect of the Prophet's *Seerah*.

If a Muslim inclines towards *Zuhd* (to abstain from worldly pleasures for the sake of Allah ﷻ), he can learn, through the study of the *Seerah*, the difference between true *Zuhd* and extremism, for the correct way to live is the balanced life that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ led. If a Muslim is afflicted by calamity, he can find consolation in the *Seerah*, for no one was afflicted with as much hardship as was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; beyond consolation, the afflicted person becomes encouraged to follow

the example of the Prophet ﷺ and patiently await for his reward from Allah ﷻ. In short, there are valuable lessons to be found in the *Seerah* for every single Muslim.

Not just the Muslim individual, but also the Muslim nation as a whole needs to benefit from the lessons that are available in the Prophet's *Seerah*. Nations rise and fall not through coincidence or through a set of arbitrary occurrences, but through universal laws that have been set in place by Allah ﷻ. At least once in our history, Muslims have succeeded in building a wonderful and stable civilization, and that was during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ and his rightly guided Caliphs; and even if Muslims prospered in later centuries, they never prospered as much as they did in the early golden years of Islam. Now we come back to the universal laws I mentioned above: The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ established a stable and prosperous nation not by chance, but by living in harmony with the said universal laws. What this means is that there is a pattern: If we want to now repeat the success that was achieved by the Muslims during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, we need to be in harmony with the same set of laws, and in doing so, we have an ideal blueprint to follow – the lives of the Prophet ﷺ and his noble Companions ﷺ.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ مَا حُمِّلْتُمْ وَإِن تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَّغُ الْمُبِينُ ٥٤﴾

"Say: 'Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, he (the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e., to convey Allah's Message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messenger's duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way (i.e., to preach in a plain way).'" (Qur'an 24: 54)

This Verse clearly indicates that success lies in following the way of the Prophet ﷺ; the following two Verses discuss some of the conditions that Muslims must fulfill if they hope to achieve

prosperity and stability as a nation:

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ٥٥﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

"Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e., Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the *Faasiqoon* (rebellious, disobedient to Allah). And perform *As-Salaat* (*Iqamat-as-Salaat*), and give *Zakaat* and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) that you may receive mercy (from Allah)." (Qur'an 24: 55, 56)

We do not have the right to say that it was due to the fact that they were supported by miracles that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were successful in establishing a Muslim country. We do not have that right for the very fact that the first generation of Muslims struggled and suffered and strove and sacrificed – and thus earned their success. They fulfilled the conditions that are discussed in the above-mentioned Verses; or in other words, they lived in harmony with those universal laws that apply to the rise and fall of nations. Consider the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah. Allah ﷻ could have made the journey a miraculous one-night journey, as He ﷻ had previously done regarding the Prophet's night journey to Jerusalem and then to the heavens. But He ﷻ didn't, and the Prophet ﷺ subsequently faced all of the hardships that came with his remarkable

migration to Al-Madeenah, thus showing us that victory comes with sacrifice and struggle.

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ realized *Eemaan* (faith) both in terms of belief and action. They strove day and night to perform good deeds; they made each and every part of their lives an act of worship; they fought against all forms of polytheism. At an individual and societal level, they took all of the material steps that are needed to form a country. Then, they actually did form their own country in Al-Madeenah, and from there, they spread Allah's religion to the farthest corners of the earth.

That we as a nation are behind today is a logical consequence of our not doing what the first generation of Muslims did to achieve success. Unwilling to change, to struggle, to reform, and to sacrifice, we think that we can achieve success and prosperity as a nation; but since that is contrary to the universal laws outlined above, we shouldn't hold our breaths, expecting some sudden change from the outside. The change must begin from within.

Weakness of faith, lack of spirituality, incorrect thinking, inner confusion and anxiety – these are the results of the great gap that exists between us as a nation and between the Noble Qur'an, the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ, and the piety of Muslims during the era of the rightly guided Caliphs.

That gap is nowhere as palpable as it is in regards to those who, though they are as far away as possible from the teachings of the Qur'an, the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ, and the way of the rightly guided Caliphs, claim that they are the representatives of Islam. They speak for hours on end, but show no understanding of Allah's universal laws that apply to the rise and fall of nations. They will speak interminably about the sayings of philosophers, politicians and others of their ilk, but they hardly bother to refer to revealed sources – the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. I do not say that one should not benefit from the experiences and knowledge of others, for wisdom is the goal of the believer: wherever he finds it, he is most worthy of it. But I do most vehemently oppose those who are enamored by the words of intellectuals, but do not heed the

words of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ; do not contemplate the history of our own nation, especially the part of it when its civilization reached its zenith during the first generation of Islam; and then aspire for positions of leadership among the Muslim nation, so that when they do become leaders, they lead according to their whims and desires, and not according to the teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

The events that took place during the Prophet's lifetime did not occur in a vacuum; they occurred in the real world, which means that we need to study the methodology of the Prophet's *Da'wah* if we are to repeat, at least to some degree, the success achieved by the first generation of Islam. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ۖ﴾ (٢١)

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad ﷺ) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much." (Qur'an 33: 21)

What did the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ do that we need to repeat? The answer to this question would require a very long list of details, but let us at least consider a few examples. First, the Prophet ﷺ followed an ideal methodology for educating his Companions ﷺ and for establishing the foundations of a stable country. He ﷺ did not call for an instant revolution, but instead strove for gradual change. He ﷺ began with what is most important: instilling correct beliefs into the hearts of his Companions ﷺ. That a movement, if it is to achieve success and stability, needs to advance forward with studied gradual steps; that, before achieving stability, the members of a given movement need to first patiently endure hardships; that, first and foremost, correct beliefs must be cemented into the hearts of Muslims: these are just a few examples of Allah's universal laws that the Prophet ﷺ submitted to, was in harmony with, and applied. His

Companions ﷺ did their part as well, trying their utmost to learn from him ﷺ and follow his instructions to the letter, so much so that if one of them was unable to spend a given day with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he would send someone in his stead, and then later ask him what he learned that day. And some people – such as is related about ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ﷺ and his companion ﷺ – would take turns going to the Prophet ﷺ; one would spend the day with the Prophet ﷺ, and the other would take care of both of their businesses. In every small and great matter, the Companions ﷺ followed the example of the Prophet ﷺ; it is no surprise, therefore, that they were able to spread the message of Islam to the far corners of the earth.

In this book, I discuss the events of the Prophet’s life, from the day he ﷺ was born – and even before that day for background information – until the day he ﷺ died. Beyond enumerating the events of the Prophet’s life, I have endeavoured to draw lessons and morals from those events, by pointing out to the reader, among other things, the significance of an event, the wisdom behind one of the Prophet’s actions or deeds, the Islamic ruling that is derived from a particular incident, and the impact that a given event should have on our character or choice of deeds.

Furthermore, I have attempted to remedy the problem of how the *Seerah* has been reduced to a limited subject of study in certain schools and among many students of knowledge. This problem resulted from a misuse and misunderstanding of valuable *Seerah* books, books that have been written in recent decades and that have gained widespread acceptance among the reading public – such as *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom*, by Safee-ur-Rahmaan Al-Mubarakpooree; *Fiqh-us-Seerah*, by Al-Ghazaalee; *Fiqh-us-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Al-Bootee; and *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abul-Hasan Ali Nadwi. Some of these books summarize the events of the Prophet’s life; others either deal with certain aspects of his life or with some of the lessons that can be derived from his life; the point is that none of the above-mentioned authors claims that he has written a comprehensive book on the Prophet’s life.

Some universities use the above-mentioned books as textbooks, and many students have, as a result, come under the impression that those books are comprehensive works on the Prophet’s biography. This notion, which is of course dangerous and false, has even gained acceptance among some Imams and leaders of Islamic movements. As a result of this widespread misunderstanding, many people have a very limited and defective understanding of the Prophet’s biography. At the end of his book, *Fiqh-us-Seerah*, Shaikh Muhammad Al-Ghazaalee warned about this very notion, saying, “You might think that you have studied the life of Muhammad ﷺ if you have followed the events of his life from his birth until his death. This is a grave mistake, for you will not gain a true understanding of the *Seerah* unless you have studied the Noble Qur’an and the pure *Sunnah* (of the Prophet ﷺ)”

I spent a number of years of my life studying the Noble Qur’an and the Prophet’s biography. Those years consisted of some of the best days of my life; deeply immersed in study, I forgot about the pains associated with being away from home. Pearls of wisdom I came across, lessons I learned, and valuable insights I was blessed to perceive – these enjoyments sustained me. It was during that period of my life that I gathered, organized, and composed the contents of this book.

Throughout my research, I noticed how each author of a *Seerah* book mentioned lessons and benefits that other authors did not mention. It sometimes occurred that Ibn Hishaam mentioned a relevant point that Adh-Dhahabee did not mention, or that Ibn Katheer, a more recent scholar, mentioned what the compilers of the “Six Books” did not mention. As for present day authors, As-Sibaa’ee might have appreciated a point that Al-Ghazaalee was not aware of – or at least did not write about; the examples of this phenomenon are endless. The point is that Allah ﷻ honoured me with the opportunity to gather and combine the findings of past and present authors; the result of that effort is this book.

In bringing this work to fruition, many people from various

countries - Libya, Yemen, Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Syria - have made valuable contributions, through discussions, correspondences, and meetings at seminars. Some provided me with rare manuscripts; others provided valuable advice on what themes I should stress; and yet others made various contributions, each in his unique way.

To be sure, I do not claim to have surpassed my predecessors. The stature of the Prophet ﷺ is great indeed; to comprehensively discuss just some aspects of his wonderful character and life requires a researcher with more time, stronger faith, a deeper understanding, and a greater intelligence than I possess. Nor do I claim infallibility, for Allah's protection from error is specific to the Messengers ﷺ and Prophets ﷺ. Whoever thinks that he has all knowledge, even of a particular subject of study, is ignorant of his own self. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝٨٥﴾

"And they ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning the Rooh (the spirit); Say: 'The Rooh (the spirit): it is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.'" (Qur'an 17: 85)

Knowledge is an ocean that has no shore. Ath-Tha'aalabee said, "Whenever anyone writes a book, he wishes on every day other than the day on which he completed it, to add to it, or to delete from it. That is the effect that one night has; then how about a number of years!" Conveying a similar sentiment, Al-'Imaad Al-Asbahaanee said, "I noticed that whenever someone finishes writing a book, he says on the day after he completed it, 'Had this been changed, it (the book) would have been better. Had this been added, that would have been a welcome (change). Had this been brought forward, it (the book) would have been better. Had this been left off, it would have been more beautiful.' This

(phenomenon) is one of the greatest of lessons (for mankind), for it proves that imperfection has a strong hold over human beings."

I hope from Allah ﷻ that I have done this work sincerely for His Countenance. I ask Him ﷻ to make this book beneficial to His slaves, to reward me for every letter that I wrote, to place this effort in my scale of good deeds, and to reward my brothers who untiringly helped me to finish this book.

"How perfect You are O Allah, and I praise You. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except you. I seek Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance."

One who is in dire need of his Lord's forgiveness and Good Pleasure.

'Alee Muhammad As-Sallaabee

2001 - 1422H

chosen as the secret meeting place of the Muslims after Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ became involved in the first ever skirmish between a Muslim and polytheists. Ibn Ishaq said, "When they would pray, the Companions ؓ of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would go to the mountain passes (that were close to Makkah); in this manner they were able to keep their prayers a secret from their people. Once, while Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ was among a group of the Messenger of Allah's Companions in one of the mountain passes of Makkah, a number of polytheists passed by them while they were praying. The polytheists came upon them and censured them for what they were doing, until they ended up fighting them. On that day, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ struck a man from the polytheists with the leg-bone of a camel; (with this blow) he broke (one of) the man's (bones). That was the first time in Islam that blood was spilled."^[1]

As a central meeting place for the Muslims, the house of Al-Arqam was where Muslims would hear newly revealed Verses from the Prophet ﷺ; it was where the Prophet ﷺ reminded them about Allah ﷻ, where he ﷺ would train them under his direct supervision, and where they would inform him about their problems.

Some Of The Main Qualities And Merits Of The First Generation Of Muslims

It was none other than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who trained the first generation of Muslims. Those Muslims, due to specific qualities that Allah ﷻ blessed them with, developed Islamic characteristics at the levels of the individual, the family, and society; as a result, they formed the foundations of an Islamic country and a wonderful Islamic civilization. Here are the main qualities that distinguish them from Muslims of later generations; a few aspects of these qualities we cannot assimilate, because they revolve around the fact that the Companions ؓ were learning

^[1] Ibn Hisham (1/236).

directly from the Prophet ﷺ; but the rest, we can and must assimilate, if we are to regain the prominence and success that Muslims once enjoyed.

1) They ؓ completely submitted to and obeyed the revelation that came down to the Prophet ﷺ

Correct knowledge and correct understanding – in matters that pertain to beliefs, legislations, manners, and so on – can only be gained through revelation: the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. The knowledge we acquire from these sources of revelation covers everything: knowledge about Allah ﷻ, His Names, His attributes, and His actions; about what rights He ﷻ has over us, and about what descriptions are unbecoming of His greatness and perfection; about Angels, the Books (i.e., revealed books), the Prophets, the Hereafter, Paradise, and Hellfire; about legislations, both of the general and of the detailed kinds; about rulings that have to do with our duties as human beings; about how to act in different situations – when angry or happy, when poor or rich, when safe or in danger, when all is well or not well; and about how to adhere to valid Islamic proofs. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا أُمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ﴾^(١)

"And of those whom We have created, there is a community who guides (others) with the truth, and establishes justice therewith."
(Qur'an 7: 181)

There are a number of reasons why the Companions ؓ were better able to submit to and apply Islamic proofs; here are some of those reasons:

- a) Their hearts were pure and free from desires – through a process of purification and training – that conflict with the teachings of Islam. Without the slightest degree of uncertainty, they were completely prepared and willing to submit to and accept all that came from Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.
- b) They ؓ were alive when revelation was descending to the

Prophet ﷺ, and they were his Companions ﷺ. And so they were more knowledgeable than anyone else about the events that prompted commentary or instruction – from either Verses of the Qur'an or sayings of the Prophet ﷺ. That knowledge obviously enabled them to have a deep understanding of revelation.

- c) It was very often the case that Verses of the Qur'an were revealed for reasons that had to do with the Prophet's Companions ﷺ – with an individual among them in particular, or with them as a group. Since the Qur'an was addressing them directly, and since revealed Verses were presenting solutions to real problems, the Qur'an had a profoundly deep and positive effect on them: They were always ready to receive a command and then to obey it and put it into action.
- d) Because of their proximity and direct access to the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ were exempt from the difficulties involved with distinguishing between authentic and false narrations, difficulties that Muslims from all later generations had to face. So for the most part, the Companions ﷺ did not need to pay attention to such matters as the chain of a narration, the acceptability of individual narrators, or the hidden defects that can be found in some narrations. They therefore had no problem in distinguishing between authentic reports and weak reports; later generations, on the other hand, needed to rely on scholarly research, so that many ignorant people who did not have the combined knowledge of chains of narrators and meanings of narrations – or who did not rely on scholars who had that knowledge – deviated from correct guidance. The era of the Companions ﷺ was replete with trustworthy individuals; furthermore, the Companions ﷺ were able to go directly to the Prophet ﷺ for knowledge. The situation was such that, if people heard someone say, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said (such and such)," they would, as Ibn 'Abbaas ﷺ described, race to fix their gazes upon him (in order to concentrate on what he was about to convey).

2) A Deep Spiritual Awakening That Resulted From Revelation And Eemaan (Faith)

The Companions ﷺ did not treat Islamic knowledge as if it were a series of facts that are pertinent exclusively to the sphere of the mind, but have nothing to do with the heart or with actions. As a result of acquiring knowledge about Allah ﷻ, His Names, His attributes, and His actions, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ loved Allah ﷻ; worshipped Him; longed not only to meet Him, but also to enjoy looking at His Noble Countenance; glorified Him; feared Him; strove hard to avoid doing those things that would bring upon them His wrath and punishment; hoped for reward from Him – for Paradise and His Good Pleasure; and cherished good thoughts about Him. Hence they embodied the positive effects of having knowledge of and faith in Allah ﷻ: love, fear, and hope. Their knowledge about Paradise and Hellfire made them long for the eternal bliss of the former and for exemption from having to spend any time at all in the latter. And so their hearts wavered between two states: hope for eternal bliss and fear of punishment in the Hereafter; thus it was that their hearts become attached to the Hereafter – so much so that it was as if they were looking with their very own eyes at the events of the Resurrection, of the scale, of the bridge (i.e., the one that is over the Hellfire, which every person must cross over; some will fall down, and others will make it to the other side), of Paradise, and of the Hellfire. Their knowledge of *Al-Qadr* (Divine Preordainment), of how everything that happens in this world has already been decreed by Allah ﷻ, had the effect of making them place their complete faith in Allah ﷻ and not in material causes. As a result of their faith in *Al-Qadr*, they did not become overly happy for the things they had, nor did they become overly sad for what was withheld from them; also, they strove to earn lawful sustenance, knowing fully well that a person will not miss out on that which was decreed for him, nor will he get that which was not decreed for him. Furthermore, faith in *Al-Qadr* instilled bravery into their souls. With their knowledge of the imminence and inevitability of

death and what comes after death, the Companions ﷺ turned away from the world and directed their energies to earning rewards in the Hereafter through the performance of good deeds. These deeply spiritual and physical manifestations are the true and greater purposes behind the acquisition of knowledge: if they are missing in one's life, then one's knowledge is actually harmful to one, both in the short term and in the long run.

Of all human beings, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ had the greatest share of the above-mentioned qualities. Their faith, which they took directly from the Prophet ﷺ, was deeper and more complete than the faith of all who came after them. During the day, they were brave fighters; and during the night, they worshipped more assiduously than monks. Their knowledge, their faith in the truth, and their fear of Allah ﷻ - none of these prevented them from seeing to their worldly affairs. They bought, sold, planted, harvested, married, took care of their families, and even helped the needy. As complete as they were in all regards, they were not even remotely near to becoming impressed by their own feats, a disease that has afflicted many worshippers from later generations. Those afflicted with this disease hold in low esteem the deeds and sacrifices of others, all the while raising themselves upon pedestals, thinking that no one is more pious than them and that no one can outdo them in performing good deeds. In themselves, they see all that is good; and in others, they see all that is evil. It is in this manner that they have deviated from the way of Prophet's Companions ﷺ.

The Personality Of The Prophet ﷺ

The house of Al-Arqam ibn Abee Arqam was the greatest institution of higher learning that mankind has ever known; how can this not be so, when its teacher was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the teacher of all of mankind. Upon graduation, the students of that school served humanity by helping to free people from the shackles of servitude to all created beings and by doing their part to bring people out from the darkness of disbelief and into the light of *Eemaan* (faith).

The graduates of the house of Al-Arqam became great men in their own right, for even after the Prophet's death, they continued, with an inexhaustible supply of energy, to spread the message of Truth to all of mankind. So great were the graduates of that school that no one from the 14 centuries that followed them equaled a single one of the likes of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ﷺ, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ﷺ, 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan ﷺ, 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ, and so on.

In less than one half of a century, the singularly superior men that the Prophet ﷺ educated were blessed with many great victories as they carried the message of *Tawheed* (Islamic Monotheism) all over the world. In the early years of his Prophethood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wisely chose and trained the key people that would be needed to lead the Muslim nation through its glorious first century of being. It is with that end in mind - the spread of Islam all over Arabia and to many parts of the world - that we can truly appreciate the early days of education and training in the house of Al-Arqam.

What effect did the Prophet's personality have on his Companions ﷺ? The moment one of them met him in the house of Al-Arqam was the moment in which one underwent a tremendous spiritual change. Coming out of darkness and into light, gaining faith and discarding disbelief, those early believers became ready and spiritually strong enough to bear all of the hardships that came with struggling in the way of their new faith.

The Prophet ﷺ had a truly magnetic personality. Great men are typically loved and surrounded by a group of admirers. But the Prophet ﷺ was more than just a great man: He ﷺ was the Messenger of Allah ﷻ; it was to him that revelation descended from Allah ﷻ, and it was his duty to spread the message of truth to all of mankind. Believers loved him not solely for his person, as great people are often loved, but also for the fact that he was, as a receiver of revelation, their direct link to their Lord. And so the Prophet ﷺ was at once a great man and a great Messenger ﷺ; in the end, both qualities are so intertwined in the same person, that

it all amounts to the same thing: One can have a deep love for the Messenger ﷺ, the man; or for the man, the Messenger ﷺ. In the heart of a believer, love for Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ becomes the motive for all feelings and actions. It was such a love that permeated the hearts of the first generation of Muslims ﷺ.

The Subject Of Study In The House Of Al-Arqam

The subject of study that the Prophet ﷺ undertook to teach in the house of Al-Arqam was the Noble Qur'an. The Prophet ﷺ strove hard to make the Qur'an the sole source of knowledge for his Companions ﷺ – the source that provided the main principles of thought needed by the individual Muslim, the Muslim family, and the Muslim society.

The Verses were freshly being revealed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and his Companions ﷺ would directly hear him reciting them. As such, the Verses were, so to speak, being poured into their hearts, thus penetrating the inner recesses of their souls. Their hearts and souls found a strong attachment to the Qur'an, so that each one of them turned into a new human being, in terms of his values, emotions, goals, manners – and overall outlook on life. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ strove to make the Qur'an the sole source of study and to not mix anything else with it. True, the subject of study in the house of Al-Arqam was, as I stated earlier, the Noble Qur'an, but of course it was also the guidance and teachings of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The Companions ﷺ made every effort to study the Qur'an; they did their utmost to both understand and apply the Verses they were learning. In each Verse, they searched out for any guidance that they could apply either inwardly or outwardly.

Based on all of the above-mentioned reasons, the first generation of Islam represented a practical application of the teachings of Islam. The Qur'an was for them a divine school, and they were its graduates, who became leaders and examples for others to follow. No generation before them as well as no generation after them comes even close to their level. To establish a nation and a

country, to lay down the foundations of belief, to instill good manners into people, to educate and raise the hearts and minds of people – for these and other similar reasons, Allah ﷻ revealed the Qur'an to the heart of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The first generation of Islam, which was the beneficiary of the Prophet's direct, personal guidance, is unequalled in terms of its achievements – both of the spiritual and material kind.

Why The House Of Al-Arqam?

The decision to choose Al-Arqam's house was certainly not an arbitrary one; to the contrary, there are a few factors that, in a strategic sense, made Al-Arqam's house an ideal place for the Muslims to conduct secret meetings:

- 1) Al-Arqam ﷺ did not openly declare his Islam, so it was highly unlikely that anyone would think that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were meeting one another in his house.
- 2) Al-Arqam ibn Abee Al-Arqam ﷺ was from the Banu Makhzoom clan, the same clan that carried the flag of war (or enmity) against the Banu Haashim clan (of which the Prophet ﷺ was a member). Even if one suspected Al-Arqam ﷺ of being a Muslim, one would still not think that the Muslims secretly met in Al-Arqam's house, for since all neighbouring houses belonged to other members of the Banu Makhzoom clan, it would mean that the Muslims were meeting in the middle of enemy territory. Any polytheist in Makkah would probably have thought this to be a highly unlikely scenario, which makes the choice of Al-Arqam's house all the more wise and intelligent.
- 3) When he embraced Islam, Al-Arqam ibn Abee Al-Arqam ﷺ was merely an adolescent, being approximately 16 years of age. If the leaders of the Quraish did ever think about trying to discover the location of the Muslims' secret meeting place, it would not have crossed their minds to search the houses of adolescent followers of the Prophet ﷺ; rather, their gazes

would have been fixed on the Prophet's house or on the houses of his older and more prominent followers – such as Abu Bakr ؓ. Otherwise, they might have suspected that the Muslims met in one of the houses of the Banu Haashim clan. Because of these reasons, it is clear that, in terms of maintaining security, choosing Al-Arqam's house was a profoundly wise decision – which turned out to be a correct decision, for it is not related in any book (at least in any book that I have come across) that the Quraish ever found out where exactly it was that the Muslims gathered together to learn their religion.

Some Of The Qualities Of The Prophet's Early Companions ؓ

The first phase of the Prophet's *Da'wah* relied on secrecy and individual striving. And in the house of Al-Arqam, the Prophet ؓ met with his followers not only to advise them and preach to them, but also to teach them, train them, and prepare them to become leaders and preachers. It was as if the Messenger of Allah ؓ specified certain duties for each Companion ؓ, so that each one knew what his role was in helping to spread Islam.

During the entire Makkan phase of the Prophet's life, the development of a Muslim society proceeded in slow, cautious, and gradual steps. The main theme of this phase is exemplified in the saying of Allah ؓ:

﴿وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدَ زِينَةَ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ۝﴾

“And keep yourself (O Muhammad ؓ) patiently with those who call on their Lord (i.e., your companions who remember their Lord with glorification, praising in prayers, etc., and other righteous deeds, etc.) morning and afternoon, seeking His Face, and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter

of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, one who follows his own lusts and whose affair (deeds) has been lost.” (Qur'an 18: 28)

In this Verse, the Prophet ؓ was being ordered to be patient with the shortcomings and mistakes of those who answered his call – to be particularly patient with their questions, especially if those questions were wrong and should not have been asked; and also to be patient when they hesitated to implement certain instructions. He ؓ was also being commanded to try his utmost to instill patience into his followers, patience they needed when they received harsh treatment from their people. Furthermore, he ؓ was being instructed to clarify to his followers the natural concomitants of conveying the truth to others: ill treatment and hardships. The above-mentioned Verse, which is from *Sooratul-Kahf*, describes some of the qualities of the first generation of Muslims, the most important of which are as follows:

1) Patience: “And Keep Yourself Patiently With Those...”

The word *As-Sabr*, or patience, is repeated frequently both in the Qur'an and in the sayings of the Prophet ؓ. Muslims are required not only to be patient themselves, but also to advise others to be patient. Patience is of such paramount importance in Islam that it is one of the four qualities of those who are saved from being in a state of loss:

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ۝١ إِذَا الْإِنْسَانُ نَفَىٰ خُسْرٍ ۝٢ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝٣﴾

“By Al-'Asr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e., order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'roof) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may

encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihaad, etc.)." (Qur'an 103: 1-3)

In this Chapter of the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ informs us that all human beings are in a state of loss, except for those who,

- 1) Believe in Allah.
- 2) Perform good deeds.
- 3) Recommend one another to the truth.
- 4) Recommend one another to patience.

Therefore, a person must not only rectify his own situation, but also must also work for the betterment of others. He rectifies his own situation by having faith and performing good deeds. He works for the betterment of others by sincerely advising others to follow the teachings of Islam and, in doing so, to be patient. When a person incorporates the four above-mentioned qualities into his character, he has fulfilled the rights of Allah ﷻ and the rights of people.

Patience is mentioned last in the above-mentioned Chapter, and for a very good reason. When one believes in Allah ﷻ, performs good deeds, and advises others to follow the truth, one will be faced with many hardships and tests, all of which require patience – patience to struggle against one's own self, to struggle against others, and to endure the vicissitudes of life.

2) Frequently supplicating to Allah ﷻ

This quality is clearly referred to in the saying of Allah ﷻ:

"With those who call on their Lord (i.e., your companions who remember their Lord with glorification, praising in prayers, etc., and other righteous deeds, etc.) morning and afternoon."
(Qur'an 18: 28)

Supplication, or *Du'a*, is indeed a great matter. When one supplicates frequently and with sincerity, many blessings are showered down upon him. One of the most important of factors

that lead to success is having a good relation with Allah ﷻ by frequently invoking for His help and guidance.

3) Sincerity

In the very same Verse, Allah ﷻ informs us about the sincerity of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, saying that they invoke their Lord, morning and night, "seeking His face." Sayings, deeds, *Jihaad* – one must do all of these for Allah ﷻ only, seeking His pleasure only, hoping for His reward alone, and not for any worldly profit, status, or advancement.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Verily, my Salaat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims." (Qur'an 6: 162, 163)

Sincerity, it must be remembered, is a prerequisite for having one's deeds accepted. For one's deed to be accepted, one must perform it sincerely for Allah ﷻ, and – this is the second prerequisite – one must perform it in accordance with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

4) Steadfastness and Firmness upon the Truth

This quality is alluded to in the same Verse:

﴿وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا﴾

"And let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world." (Qur'an 18: 28)

The steadfastness alluded to in this Verse is part of an overall steadfastness by which a Muslim should be distinguished. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ
وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا﴾ (٣٣)

"Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah [i.e., they have gone out for Jihaad (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers], of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e., have been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah) in the least." (Qur'an 33: 23)

This Verse contains the mention of three qualities: Faith, in, 'the believers'; manliness, in, 'are men' (the word *Rijaal* is used, and it means 'men,' as opposed to *Dhukoor*, which means males); and truthfulness, in, 'who have been true to their covenant with Allah ﷻ.' In order to remain steadfast upon the truth, one should possess these three qualities. Faith inspires one to hold on to high values and to make significant sacrifices for the sake of one's principles and beliefs. Manliness induces one to go after one's goals, without taking notice of trifling people and trifling matters. And truthfulness helps prevent the occurrence of degeneration in one's character. If one has all of the three above-mentioned qualities, then it matters not if one sees the hangman's rope, the shiny part of a sword's blade perched over one's neck, worldly profit, or an enticingly beautiful woman, for he will, by the permission of Allah ﷻ, remain steadfast upon the truth.

These were, if not all, then at least the most important of the qualities that the first generation of Muslims possessed.

The Spreading Of The Da'wah Among The Subtribes Of The Quraish, And The Universality Of Islam's Message

During the secret phase of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, Islam spread rather evenly among the various clans of the Quraish, with no single clan having a predominantly large number of converts. This phenomenon was certainly contrary to the nature of tribal

life during those times. Since Islam was not universally accepted by all of the members of any given clan, Muslims did not have a source of protection, which would have come from tribal loyalty had all the members of a single clan embraced Islam. But on the other hand, had all of the Muslims been from a single clan, all of the other clans would have joined forces to attack that clan. As the matter stood, Islam spread throughout all of Quraish's clans, without any of the adverse effects that result from tribal loyalty. Consider that Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ﷺ was from the Taim clan; 'Uthmaan ﷺ, from Banu Umayyah; Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awwaam ﷺ, from Banu Asad; Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ, from Banu 'Abd-ad-Daar; 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ, from Banu Haashim; 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn 'Auf ﷺ, from Banu Zuhrah; Sa'eed ibn Zaid ﷺ, from Banu 'Adee; and 'Uthmaan ibn Madh'oon, from Jumah. In fact, during the early stages of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, a number of Muslims weren't even from the Quraish. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ﷺ was from the Hudhail tribe; 'Utbah ibn Ghazwaan ﷺ, from Maazin; 'Abdullah ibn Qais ﷺ, from Al-Ash'ariyyeen; 'Ammmaar ibn Yaasir ﷺ, from 'Ans, which was from Madhij; Zaid ibn Haarith ﷺ, from Kalb; At-Tufail ibn 'Amr ﷺ, from Daus; 'Amr ibn 'Abasah ﷺ, from Saleem; and Suhaib An-Namaree, from Banu An-Namir ibn Qaasit. It is clear, therefore, that Islam was not limited to Makkah.

All of the steps the Prophet ﷺ took during the secret phase of his mission – in terms of taking safety precautions, educating his followers, and training them – was in preparation for the next phase, when Islam was going to be openly preached to the people. Islam was not intended to remain a secret; rather, the message of Islam was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ in order to establish proof upon mankind and to save whomsoever Allah ﷻ wills from the darkness of ignorance and disbelief. From the very early stages of Muhammad's Prophethood, Allah ﷻ made clear the scope of his mission. Both of the following Verses, which speak of the universality of Islam's message, were revealed in Makkah, before the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah:

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The Dhaat As-Salaasil Expedition

Only a few days after the Muslim army returned from Mo'tah, the Prophet ﷺ assembled another army, albeit one smaller in size, which was to be sent on an expedition to Dhaat As-Salaasil. This time, the Prophet ﷺ appointed 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ to lead the army, a man who had embraced Islam only a few months earlier. The purpose of the expedition was to punish the Qudaa'ah tribe for two reasons: First, because of their recent participation alongside the Romans during the battle of Mo'tah; and second, because they were becoming increasingly hostile towards Al-Madeenah, moving closer and closer to it with the intention of doing its people harm. 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas's army consisted of three hundred men from the *Muhaajiroon* and the *Ansaar*. When the army had almost reached its destination, 'Amr ؓ was told that the enemy had mobilized a large army, and so he sent a message to the Prophet ﷺ, asking for reinforcements. Shortly thereafter, reinforcements came in the shape of a contingent that was headed by Abu 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarraah ؓ.^[1]

With the Muslim army now well-equipped and well-manned, the fighting began; however, when 'Amr ؓ went deep into Qudaa'ah territory, he found that the opposing army had broken up, its soldiers having scattered about in various directions, with each man trying to save his own life. The goal of the mission, which was to put back the fear of Muslims into the hearts of Ash-Sham's people, was accomplished; furthermore, past allies became allies once again, and

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* (2/471).

new tribes entered into treaties with the Muslims. During the course of the expedition, many people embraced Islam, particularly people from the Banu 'Abs, Banu Murrah, and Banu Dheebaa tribes. 'Uyainah ibn Hisn, the leader of the Fizaarah tribe, entered into an alliance with the Muslims; and he was followed in that regard by Banu Ashja' as well as by Banu Sulaim, which was headed by Al-'Abbaas ibn Mirdaas. The expedition was a success for another reason as well: The Muslims now became the strongest force in the northern parts of Arab territory, which probably sealed the fact that they also became the strongest force in all of Arabia.^[1]

Lessons and Morals

1) The Sincerity of 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ

'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent for me and said, 'Take your clothing and your weapons, and then come to me. When I later went to him, he ﷺ was performing ablution. He shot a penetrating glance at me, lowered his head, and said, 'I want to send you as the leader of an army (the army that was to go out to Dhaat As-Salaasil); Allah will save you from harm and make you gain riches (from the spoils of war). In a good way, I hope for you to gain wealth.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, it was not for wealth that I embraced Islam. I submitted and became a Muslim only because I desired Islam and because I wanted to be with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'O 'Amr, blessed is good wealth (i.e., wealth that is derived through lawful means) in the hands of a righteous man.'"^[2]

This *Hadeeth* attests to the truthfulness, sincerity, and strong faith of 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ. But even after 'Amr ؓ made it clear that the acquirement of wealth was not his motivation, the Prophet ﷺ still wanted him to gain wealth, explaining to him that lawfully

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abu Shohbah (2/433).

^[2] Related by Ibn Hibbaan as is mentioned in *Al-Mawaarid* (2277); also, refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah* (508). Al-Albaanee declared this narration to be authentic in *Saheeh Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*. Ahmad related it as well in his *Musnad*, in the *Musnad of Ash-Shamiyyoon*, in the *Hadeeth of 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ*.

derived wealth is good when it falls into the hands of a righteous man – for a righteous man will spend it on good causes and use it to take care of himself and his family.^[1]

2) Unity Means Strength, and Division Means Weakness

When the reinforcements arrived, a small disagreement arose, but it was quickly ended through the wise actions of Abu 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarraah ؓ. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was the leader of the contingent that had been sent as reinforcements; meanwhile, 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ was the leader of the original army. When it was time for prayer, both Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ and 'Amr ؓ wanted to lead the men in prayer. 'Amr ؓ said to Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ, "You came only to serve as reinforcements for me; therefore, you do not have the right to lead me. I am the *Ameer* (the leader); the Prophet ﷺ sent you to me only as reinforcements." The *Muhaajiroon* said, "No, rather you are the leader of your Companions, and he is the leader of his Companions." 'Amr ؓ said, "No, rather your group has come as reinforcements for us (therefore you are under my leadership)." Seeing that the matter was soon going to precipitate into a serious disagreement, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ, who was an easygoing, well-mannered person, said, "Be at peace, O 'Amr, for you should know that the last advice that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave to me consisted of his words: When you go to your companion, obey one another (i.e., cooperate with one another), and do not disagree with one another. By Allah, if you have disobeyed me, then I will obey you." Thus Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ obeyed 'Amr's command, and throughout the rest of the expedition, it was 'Amr ؓ who would lead the men in prayer.

3) 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ Strives to Protect His Soldiers

'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ took the following three important steps to ensure the safety and well-being of his soldiers:

a) He ؓ Would Travel During the Night and Hide During the Day

A far-sighted and wise leader, 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ knew that the

enemy was potentially on the lookout for the Muslim army; furthermore, he knew that, given the small size of his army, he had to take the enemy by surprise if he was going to win the battle while incurring as few losses as possible. For these reasons, 'Amr ؓ decided to travel during the night and to hide during the day, a strategy that had an additional benefit as well, which was to protect the soldiers from the heat of the sun, so as to preserve their strength for the upcoming battle.

b) He ؓ Forbade His Men From Lighting Fires During the Night

The nights were cold, and the soldiers asked 'Amr ؓ permission to light fires in order to enjoy some respite from the cold. But 'Amr ؓ refused their request, not to punish them in any way but to protect them. With his many years of military experience, he ؓ knew that the harm of lighting a fire – of being seen and attacked – was much greater than the benefit derived thereby. The soldiers were simply going to have to tough it out. When Abu Bakr ؓ interceded on behalf of the soldiers, 'Amr ؓ remained adamant, saying, "If anyone ignites a fire, I will throw him into it." Upon returning to Al-Madeenah, the soldiers told the Prophet ﷺ about how 'Amr ؓ forbade them from lighting fires; and when the Prophet ﷺ asked him about it, he ؓ said, "I disliked the thought of giving them permission to light fires because I feared that the enemy would then see how few they were (and would then become bold enough to attack us)."^[1] The Prophet ﷺ then expressed his approval of 'Amr's reasoning and decision.

c) He ؓ Forbade His Men from Chasing Down the Enemy

In coming up with a strategy to achieve the goals of the expedition, 'Amr ؓ particularly took into consideration the small number of men he had under his command. That is why he ؓ travelled at night, and that is why he ؓ forbade his men from igniting fires; under no circumstances did he ؓ want the enemy to know the size of his army. The smallness of his army was also the main factor that

^[1] Refer to *At-Taarkeeh Al-Islaamee* by Al-Humaidee (7/133).

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pg. 509) and *Kanzul-'Ummaal* by Al-Muttaqee Al-Hindee.

prompted 'Amr ؓ to return to Al-Madeenah as soon as the goals of the expedition were achieved. After his army defeated the enemy, the Muslims wanted to pursue fleeing enemy fighters; but 'Amr ؓ forbade them from doing so, for if the Muslims became too scattered about in the area, the enemy could catch them unawares with a surprise ambush. 'Amr ؓ later explained to the Prophet ﷺ the reason why he forbade his men from pursuing the enemy, saying, "I didn't want my men to follow them, fearing that they would have reinforcements (waiting to help them against us)." The Prophet ﷺ expressed his approval of 'Amr's wise decision - a decision that enabled 'Amr's men to remain protected and to return safely to Al-Madeenah.

4) 'Amr's Profound Understanding of Islamic Jurisprudence

'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ said, "I had a wet dream on one cold night during the Dhaat As-Salaasil expedition, and I feared that, if I took a bath (to purify myself), I would die as a result (because of the extreme cold). And so I performed *At-Tayammum*, the alternate form of ablution (that is performed with high ground in the absence of water or when using water is not possible). I then led my companions in the morning prayer. They later mentioned that to the Prophet ﷺ, who said, 'O 'Amr, you led your companions in prayer when you were in a major state of impurity!' I informed him about what prevented me from taking a shower; I said, 'Verily, I heard the saying of Allah:

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا﴾

"And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you." (Qur'an 4: 29)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ didn't say anything else, but simply laughed."^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 509). Ibraaheem Al-'Alee said, "The chain of this narration is authentic. Abu Daawood related this *Hadeeth* in the Book of Purification, and Ahmad related it in his *Musnad* (the *Musnad* of Ash-Shamiyyoon), from the rest of 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas's narration. Ibn Katheer mentioned it as well in *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah*, in the chapter, "The Battle of Dhaat As-Salaasil).

This story proves that, even in the presence of water, one may perform *At-Tayammum* to purify oneself from a major state of impurity, if one fears that using water will be detrimental to one's health. 'Amr ؓ became impure when he had a wet dream, and instead of using water, he ؓ performed *At-Tayammum*, fearing that using water would lead to his death. When he ؓ later informed the Prophet ﷺ about the rationale behind his actions, the Prophet ﷺ neither reproached him nor forbade him from doing the same in the future.

'Amr ؓ also proved by his actions that performing *Ijtihaad* was permissible during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ; *Ijtihaad* involves a process of inferring a ruling when it is not clearly mentioned in any revealed text. For based on the Verse, "And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you," 'Amr inferred that, given his circumstances, it was perfectly acceptable for him to perform *At-Tayammum* instead of taking a bath with water. When the Prophet ﷺ laughed and said nothing in response to 'Amr's explanation, he ؓ was silently approving of two things: Of 'Amr ؓ performing *Ijtihaad* in the first place, and of the correct conclusion of 'Amr's *Ijtihaad*.

Also, we learn from this story that a person who performs *At-Tayammum* (with a valid reason for doing so) may lead others in prayer, even when the people standing behind him have performed ablution with water. 'Amr ؓ, who had performed *At-Tayammum* was the *Imam* of five-hundred people who had performed ablution with water. Again, the Prophet's silence in the matter meant implicit approval on his part ﷺ.

One of the most striking aspects of this story is the fact that 'Amr ؓ had embraced Islam only a few months earlier. His juristic powers of reasoning were impressive indeed, almost giving one the impression that he ؓ had been familiar with the Qur'an and its Verses for many years, and not for only a few months. That impression is probably not too far off the mark, for it is quite possible that 'Amr ؓ had been listening to and studying Verses of the Qur'an long before he ؓ embraced Islam. After all, the polytheists could not

help but to be amazed by the Qur'an, for its speech was the most amazing and eloquent speech that they had ever heard. And we have hitherto seen that, during the Makkan phase of the Prophet's biography, polytheists would secretly try to hear the Prophet ﷺ recite the Qur'an - secretly because they did not want other polytheists to find out what they were doing and to label them as traitors. That 'Amr ؓ was well-acquainted with the Qur'an prior to his entry into Islam is established by another incident as well: He showed some knowledge of the Qur'an when he told An-Najaashee to ask the Muslim migrants about 'Eesa ؑ, for he knew that, while Christians believed in the divinity of 'Eesa, the Qur'an confirmed that 'Eesa ؑ was not a part of the trinity but was in fact the slave and Prophet of Allah.^[1] 'Amr therefore thought that he could sow dissension between An-Najaashee and his Muslim guests if the latter were forced to explain their beliefs about 'Eesa ؑ.

5) Some of the Consequences of the Expeditions that were Sent to the North

After the Al-Hudaibiyyah Treaty was signed, the Muslims had very little to fear from the Quraish and other tribes in the region. Being safe from the western and south-western parts of the Arabian Peninsula, the Prophet ﷺ was able to concentrate on potential threats in the north. The expeditions he ﷺ sent to the north were a success; many important aims were achieved, and the Muslim army managed to reach the borders of Rome. With the passing of every day, the Muslim nation was expanding and its people were enjoying greater peace and security - since more and more enemies were either embracing Islam or entering into treaties with Muslims. All of these benefits can be directly traced back to the Treaty of Al-Hudaibiyyah; it was, therefore, just as Allah ﷻ described it to be: a manifest victory. The conquest of Khaibar, the goals achieved at Mo'tah, and the expansion of the Muslim nation during the Dhaat As-Salaasil expedition - all of these achievements were made possible by the treaty of Al-Hudaibiyyah.

^[1] Refer to *Ma'een As-Seerah* (pg. 381).